

CURL UP AND SIT TALL

This exercise has participants lift their trunk from a reclining position into the tall sitting position. Use it to develop abdominal and back strength.

Benefits »

- ⦿ Strength training using a functional, everyday movement pattern.
- ⦿ Strengthens torso, especially the abdominal wall.
- ⦿ Encourages tall sitting.

Set It Up »

You will not need any special equipment.

How to Do It »

The Start

Participants sit about 4 inches (10 centimeters) from their chair back. Arms are crossed against the chest.



The Moves

Use the following cues.

- ⦿ Roll your back toward the chair. See if you can tilt your hips back so that the low back touches the chair first, then the midback (see also Rock the Pelvis Backward, page 71). It looks like slouching.
- ⦿ From this reclining position, breathe in and look up.
- ⦿ As you exhale, lower the chin to the chest. Then use your abdominals to curl up and away from the chair. Lift your shoulders first to form the curl up.
- ⦿ Curl up until shoulders are over the hips.
- ⦿ Lengthen your spine into a tall sit as you finish the exercise.
- ⦿ Think of lifting through your ribs upward into the tall sitting position.

- ⊙ Hold the tall sit for 2 seconds.
- ⊙ Relax and roll back to the slouched position.
- ⊙ Use these cues:
 - Breathe in and look up.
 - Exhale, lower chin, curl up, and sit tall.
 - Repeat six times and progress to 12 to 15 repetitions, as tolerated.

Take It Further »

- ⊙ Increase the length of time the tall sit is held.
- ⊙ Lift elbows and make Genie arms as you bring yourself up to a tall sit.

Playground Swings

This great variation mimics swinging on a playground swing: When you're back, you lay back and your legs are extended. As you come forward, the legs get pulled under and you sit as tall as you can! With that picture in mind, tell them our modification is that only one leg will do the pumping action.

- ⊙ Roll back on to the chair.
- ⊙ Breathe in and look up. Extend one leg out straight.
- ⊙ Exhale, curl up, and sit tall. Bring extended leg in and up into a knee lift (see Knee Lift, Abs In on page 121).
- ⊙ Hold tall position 2 seconds.
- ⊙ Relax, then repeat with other leg pumping your swing upward.
- ⊙ Start with 3 repetitions per leg and progress to 12, as tolerated.

Keep It Safe »

These curl-up exercises should be avoided by participants with osteoporosis.

Live It »

Everything participants need to know for this exercise, they actually learned in kindergarten. The playground swing movement can make this activity feel joyous, and it works.